



Discussion Group Packet

Film Discussion Guidelines

Next week you will be leading the class in a discussion of the film you just saw. In other words, you will be teaching the class. That's kind of scary at first, but most of the students who have done it really seemed to enjoy it and got a lot out of it. Most of the groups have done some very good things. Here are some guidelines to help you make your class successful:

- Plan enough activities to teach the entire class period. In reality I will need about 5-10 minutes at the end of class to talk about the next film, etc., but it is better for you to have too many activities than not enough.
- The most important thing about class discussion is to involve the class as much as possible. Some ways to do this:
 - Break the class up into small discussion groups of about 5 students to talk about questions you ask.
 - Write the questions you want students to discuss on the board and make sure they know what you want them to do.
 - When students are discussing among themselves all the members of your group should scatter around the room listening in on discussions to help students as necessary and to make sure that they are speaking English.
 - If students aren't responding to your questions it's OK to call on them anyway.
 - It's OK to use Chinese names when calling on students.
 - Have students stand when they talk. This makes it easier to hear them in the back of the room.
- Giving background information on the movie is OK but please don't use information from the textbook; students can read this for themselves. The internet is a great source of new information. Please limit background information and plot summaries to about 5 or 10 minutes.

Activities for Film Discussions

You can use any or none of these ideas; it's up to you:

1. Write some discussion questions on the board and divide the class into groups to talk about them. You can use some of the questions in this packet and/or questions on the homework assignments. (The post-viewing homework is especially good for finding discussion questions.) Better yet, make up some questions of your own.

One good way of dividing the class in to discussion groups is to have them count off from 1 to 5 (or whatever). All the 1s go to the first group, the 2s to the second, etc.

2. Move groups up to sit in the front of the class instead of at their tables.
3. Game: this game is a variation on Count-7. Before class your group writes questions about the movie on strips of paper and puts them into a container. During class have students count off starting with 1. When a student gets any number with 7 (7, 17, 27, etc.) or a multiple of 7 (14, 21, 28, etc.) in it, they must say "pass." If they say the number, they must come to the front and draw a question from the container and either answer it or call on someone from the class to answer it.
4. Game: Stump the Experts. Divide the class into two teams. Each team selects two members as experts to stand in front of the class. The moderator (one of your group) calls on volunteers to ask an expert from the other team a question. If the expert gets the answer:
 - right, their team gets a point.
 - wrong, the person who asked the question must answer the question correctly. If the person who asked the question gets the answer:
 - right, they go up front and become an expert

- wrong, their team loses two points and they don't become an expert.
5. Write up a summary of the movie plot and then print a copy for each group. Cut the copies into strips, one paragraph or sentence on each strip. Mix up the strips and give them to the groups. The groups have to put the strips in the right order.
 6. Have students imagine what happened to the characters 5-10 years after the movie was over.
 7. Have students write their own questions about the movie then ask them to the class.
 8. For the last activity, ask every student in the class to rate the film in stars, 5 stars being great, 4 good, etc. and tell why they think so. Tally the number of stars on the board using English-type tally marks (ⅢⅢⅢⅢ).

Sleepless in Seattle

Possible Topics for ESL Class Discussion

from www.eslnotes.com

1. When two people meet and fall in love, is it “destiny,” or just a random event?
2. Do you believe in fate?
3. Does this movie have too romantic a view of love and romance?
4. Is there such a thing as “the perfect wife” (or husband)?
5. Can people fall in love without actually meeting each other?
6. What did you like and not like about this movie?

Some additional questions:

7. The movie begins with a radio talk show in which listeners call in and talk about their problems and get advice from the host, who is often a psychologist. Do such programs exist in China? What kinds of problems do they talk about in China?
8. In this movie, Sam’s 8-year-old son Jonah plays the crucial part in bringing Sam and Annie together. Some say that this is unrealistic, that children don’t want to have their parents marry again, at least in China. What do you think?
9. What else might be unrealistic in the movie?
10. If this movie were made in China, what would be the same and what would be different about it?

11. What happens to Sam, Jonah and Annie after the end of the movie? What do you think their lives will be like in 5 or 10 years?

12. If you were Annie, would you do the same thing she did and pursue Sam or would you stay with Walter? Why or why not?

Additional discussion/activity from class 8-1, fall 2006:

Walter and Annie meet by accident 20 years after the movie ends. What do they say to each other? Have each group put on a dialogue or performance playing Annie, Walter and any other characters that might be present, such as Annie's daughter or Walter's wife. Use your imagination.